

East Elloe Rural District Council



ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR 1939

C. W. DIXON,
M.D., B.S.(Lond.), D.L.O., D.C.H., D.P.H.
Medical Officer of Health


East Elloe Rural District Council



ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR 1939

C. W. DIXON,
M.D., B.S.(Lond.), D.L.O., D.C.H., D.P.H.
Medical Officer of Health



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2017 with funding from
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b29182153>

To the Chairman and Members of the East Elloe Rural District Council.

Gentlemen,

I have much pleasure in presenting this Report on the health and sanitary circumstances of the district for the year 1939.

This year of eight months uncertain peace and four months war was unfortunately not a favourable time for new developments. However, a start has been made on a slum clearance programme and over seventy families are to be rehoused. This unfortunately cannot be continued until after the war, and the problem of dealing with over a thousand worn-out houses will require energy and determination. The question of acquiring land for building should follow some well defined and planned course, to the extent, if necessary, of compulsory purchase.

Although there is an acute housing shortage, the haphazard building in isolated parts far from villages has produced the rather ridiculous situation of a difficulty in finding tenants for some Council houses, whereas applicants for one empty house on a more advantageous site may number a hundred or more.

A great step forward has been made in the provision for the first time of water closets in the new Council houses. The disposal arrangements to be provided are satisfactory and cheap in first cost and maintenance.

The prevention of defects by the thorough inspection of new premises during course of erection is the best method of preventing those very troubles for which houses are at present being condemned.

The question of sewage disposal can never be satisfactorily dealt with until the urban sections of the district have main drainage. The cost of the present night-soil and cesspool service at over £1000 per annum would go quite an appreciable way to paying interest on the capital sum necessary for such a scheme.

Inspection of premises, etc., under the Milk & Dairies Orders, Public Health Act and the Food & Drugs Act cannot be carried out satisfactorily owing to insufficient staff. This work is unfortunately regarded by some as tending to hamper and restrict the interests of persons engaged in such trades, whereas one finds in actual practice if an outbreak of infectious disease occurs likely to have been caused through the medium of food, those who are involved are only too willing to assist the Council's Officers in their work of investigation.

The reception of evacuees produced new public health problems, particularly the question of vermin. An efficient system of inspection set up at the detraining centre reduced the problem to very minor proportions. The influx of new persons to the district has not, so far, altered our good record for infectious disease.

I am indebted to Mr. W. B. Hitchings for much of the material included in this Report.

Finally, I wish to express my thanks to the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee for their courtesy and co-operation, to the Sanitary Inspector and his Assistant for the excellent work done during the year, and to the other Officers of the Council for their help and advice on many problems.

East Elloe Rural District Council

Public Health and Housing Committee.

Chairman :

Councillor H. W. FARROW, J.P. -

Members :

Councillor C. I. PATCHETT, J.P.

„ G. A. MITCHELL, J.P.

„ R. G. BARWELL

„ F. BAXTER

„ R. BEBA

„ J. J. BEMROSE

„ F. BOWD, J.P.

„ The Rev. C. V. BROWNE-WILKINSON

„ G. H. CAMPLING

„ G. CAMPLING

„ J. DICKINSON

„ H. GROUND

„ W. KNOTT

„ A. G. LENTON

„ A. RITCHIE

„ A. WELLS

„ G. B. WILSON

Staff of the Health Department.

Medical Officer of Health—

C. W. DIXON, M.D., B.S.(Lond.), D.L.O., D.C.H. D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspectors—

W. B. HITCHINGS, B.Sc., A.R.San.I.

R. H. GREGORY, M.S.I.A.

Student Inspector—

D. T. BROWN

Meat Inspectors—

J. BEEKEN and G. HALL

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area in Acres	...	85,650.
Registrar-General's estimate of		
(a) resident population, mid-year 1939	...	22,330
(b) average population appropriate to the calculation of the death rates	...	22,570
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1939)	...	6,225
Rateable Value (31/3/40)	...	£64,793
Penny Rate (31/3/40)	...	£273

Extracts from Vital Statistics.

		Total	M.	F.	
Live Births	Legitimate...	346	159	187	} Birth rate per 1000 of estimated resident popu- lation mid-1939 ... 16.12
	Illegitimate...	14	8	6	
Total Live Births		360	167	193	
Still Births	Legitimate ...	14	10	4	} Rate per 1000 Total (live and still) births— 39.89
	Illegitimate...	1	1	—	
Total Still Births		15	11	4	
Deaths	...	220	109	111	} Death rate per 1000 of estimated resident popu- lation ... 9.75

The death rate given above is the "crude death rate," that is, the number of deaths of East Elloe residents per 1000 of the population. For the purpose of comparison with other districts, this crude rate is adjusted as it does not take into account the type of population, *e.g.* whether composed mainly of old or young persons, or containing other than the normal proportions of males and females. The adjusting factor allocated to East Elloe by the Registrar-General, known as the "areal comparability factor," is 0.93, and when the crude death rate is multiplied by this factor, the adjusted death rate for East Elloe is 9.07

Deaths from puerperal causes :		Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births
	Deaths.	
Puerperal sepsis ..	Nil	00.00
Other puerperal causes	2	5.32
Total	2	5.32

Number of Deaths of Infants under one year of age :

		Total	M.	F.
Number of Deaths	{ Legitimate	15	10	5
	{ Illegitimate	1	1	Nil
		—	—	—
Total ...		16	11	5
		—	—	—

Death rate of Infants under one year of age :

All infants per 1,000 live births	...	...	44.32
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births			43.23
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate	„	...	71.43

		Total	M.	F
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	...	31	17	14
„ „ Measles (all ages)	...	Nil	Nil	Nil
„ „ Whooping Cough (all ages)		3	2	1
„ „ Diarrhoea (under 2 years)		3	2	1

Comments on Vital Statistics.

The birth rate of 16.12 per 1,000 estimated population is higher than the average for England and Wales of 15.0. It is above the rate of East Elloe for 1938 but below those for 1937, 1936, and 1935.

The adjusted death rate for East Elloe of 9.07 is well below that for England and Wales of 12.1. It is also the lowest for the last three years in East Elloe.

The death rate for children under one year of age (44.32) is well below the average for England and Wales (50) and below the rates for East Elloe for 1938, 1937, 1936, and 1935.

Total Deaths in East Elloe during 1939.

<i>Causes of Death.</i>	<i>Male.</i>	<i>Female.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
All causes	109	111	220
Influenza	3	1	4
Respiratory Tuberculosis	5	3	8
Other Tuberculosis	—	—	—
Encephalitis lethargica	—	—	—
Cancer	17	14	31
Diabetes	—	3	3
Cerebral Hæmorrhage	7	17	24
Heart Disease	22	17	39
Other circulatory diseases	2	4	6
Aneurysm	—	—	—
Bronchitis	2	5	7
Pneumonia (all forms)	6	2	8
Other respiratory diseases	—	2	2
Diarrhœa under two years	2	1	3
Diarrhœa two years and over	1	—	1
Cirrhosis of liver	—	—	—
Other liver diseases	1	1	2
Appendicitis	—	1	1
Peptic Ulcers	—	1	1
Other digestive diseases	6	1	7
Acute and Chronic Nephritis	2	2	4
Puerperal Sepsis	—	—	—
Other puerperal diseases	—	2	2
Congenital causes, etc.	5	3	8
Measles	—	—	—
Typhoid Fever	—	—	—
Whooping Cough	2	1	3
Diphtheria	—	1	1
G.P.I., etc.	1	—	1
Senility	2	13	15
Suicide	1	—	1
Other violence	5	2	7
Other defined causes	15	11	26
Ill defined causes	2	3	5
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Totals ...	109	111	220
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

General Provision of Health Services for the Area.

A list of the Public Health Officers of the Authority is given at the beginning of the report. The Medical Officer of Health is also Assistant County M.O.H. to the Holland County Council.

Bacteriological work is carried out at the County Laboratory at Boston, to which all specimens from the area are sent.

An ambulance is available for cases of infectious disease. For ordinary medical, surgical and accident cases, transport is afforded by the Spalding Joint Ambulance Committee which consists of representatives of the Spalding Urban and Rural Authorities and the St. John Ambulance Brigade. East Elloe contributes to this Committee on a mileage basis for approved necessitous cases, but bears no share of the general expenses.

Home nursing is carried out by the various local Nursing Associations. The Local Authority employs no nurses of its own. The County Council provides centres for Tuberculosis and Maternity and Child Welfare work at Holbeach, Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge.

Cases of infectious disease are accommodated at Boston in the Hospital of the County of Holland Joint Board to which the East Elloe R.D.C. is a contributory authority. The Isolation Hospital at Fleet is reserved for cases of smallpox.

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Water.

Further progress has been made in the provision of a pure water supply in East Elloe. It is only eight years since Holbeach, Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge first received a piped supply.

The water is obtained from artesian bores at Bourne, pumped to Spalding and then to Weston Tower, where a series of electrically driven pumps effect distribution over the area. Two additional water towers are provided, one at Little Sutton (for the Sutton Bridge district) and another at Whaplode Drove (for certain parts of the Fen area).

I am indebted to Councillor G. A. Mitchell, J.P., Chairman of the Water Committee, and to Mr. G. Ewart Roberts, B.Sc.(Lond.), A.M.I.C.E., Water Engineer, for permission to publish the following figures showing the rapid growth of daily consumption for years ending March 31st.

Year	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940
Gallons per day	107,000	110,000	177,000	182,000	229,000

The total length of mains now laid exceeds 200 miles, and at the present time water is available to some 19,000 of the population.

The mains water is subject to chemical and bacteriological control and the analyses are shown below.

Chemical Analysis

Total Solids in solution	32.2	(Grains per gallon)
Ammonia { Free and Saline	nil	” ”
Albuminoid	0.0007	” ”
Chlorine in Chlorides	1.51	” ”
Nitrogen as Nitrates	nil	” ”
Nitrites	nil	” ”
Oxygen absorbed from Permanganate	00.045	” ”
Hardness { Total	30.0 =	21 degrees
Permanent	10.3 =	7.2 degrees
Physical Characters	Bright and clear	

Remarks.

This water is of great organic purity and free from all traces of pollution. The supply is a pure and wholesome water, suitable for drinking and all the purposes of a public supply.

Bacteriological Analysis.

Bacteria per ml. developing at		B. Coli per	Cl. Welchii &
37°C	22°C	100 ml.	Streptococci
Nil	Nil	Nil	Not isolated

Remarks. This is a satisfactory supply.

During the year,

2 samples of mains water have been taken for chemical analysis.
14 samples of mains water have been taken for bacteriological analysis.

13 samples of well and cistern waters have been taken for bacteriological analysis.

The mains samples have generally been very satisfactory. All samples taken from wells and cisterns have been unsatisfactory.

A typical example is the following result on a sample of well water :

Bacteria per ml. developing at 37°C.	...	520
" " " " , 22°C.	...	710
B. Coli present per 100 ml.	...	180+
Streptococci present in 10 ml.	...	Cl. Welchii not isolated.

Remarks. A bad water.

Drainage and Sewerage.

The question of a sewerage scheme in the district is a very difficult one. The peculiar geographical circumstances and also the scattered nature of the population render the provision of a scheme for the whole area practically impossible. The execution of schemes in the three towns of Holbeach, Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge would be an expensive matter, but the difficulties would be in no way insurmountable.

During the year, the Council has considered the question of sewerage and sewage disposal, and Major Waters, a Civil Engineer, was requested to prepare a Report.

In this report it was pointed out that owing to the nature of the sub-soil, the greatest depth at which sewers can economically be laid is comparatively shallow and that even by taking full advantage of all slight undulations, the maximum distance which such a sewer can be laid from a pumping station is unlikely to exceed, say, 200 yards for a 6" sewer. In the case of a 9" sewer laid at a gradient of 1 in 250, this maximum distance will not exceed about a quarter of a mile.

The Report dealt only with those parts of Holbeach, Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge which might be termed urban in character.

It was considered that although probably only two main pumping stations would be required for Holbeach, a multiplicity of small ejector stations would be necessary. The number of such stations could be kept within reasonable limits if strict byelaws were made to ensure that all W.C's. and their connecting drains were installed at appropriately high levels, thus artificially increasing the available falls as much as practicable to enable each plant to service the widest possible area.

The Disposal Works would comprise Balancing Tanks, Screening Chambers, Sedimentation Tanks, Bacteriological Beds and Humus Tanks, with the necessary auxiliary sludge lagoons and Pump House.

The necessity for laying the various sewers at shallow depths at the minimum possible gradients and at the maximum possible speed in bad ground would almost certainly involve the abandonment of the generally used glazed stoneware material for the sewer pipes (except possibly in isolated cases) in favour of cast-iron or asbestos cement.

On prices ruling at the time, it was estimated that the main system for Holbeach only, complete as described and including the appropriate instalment of the sewage works would cost in the neighbourhood of £30 000 (works and contingencies only). This estimate did not include the cost of reconnecting individual drains

for the purpose of excluding as much surface water as possible. Pending a complete survey it was of course impossible to forecast just what would be involved in this direction, but for guidance it was estimated that the cost would not exceed £6 per house or say £4,000 in all.

Similar circumstances prevailed at Long Sutton, and it was suggested that two main pumping stations would be needed plus ejectors. This would provide for some 500 properties at Long Sutton.

It was considered unnecessarily expensive to consider laying a connecting pipe between Holbeach and Long Sutton and so permit disposal of sewage from both places at a single works. However, it was suggested that Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge should have a common disposal works.

It was estimated that the cost of works for these two parishes, including the two pumping stations at Long Sutton and the two ejector stations and the pumping station at Sutton Bridge at about £45,000 (works and contingences only). It was roughly estimated that the cost of reconnecting individual drains to the new sewers would involve a cost of about £6,000.

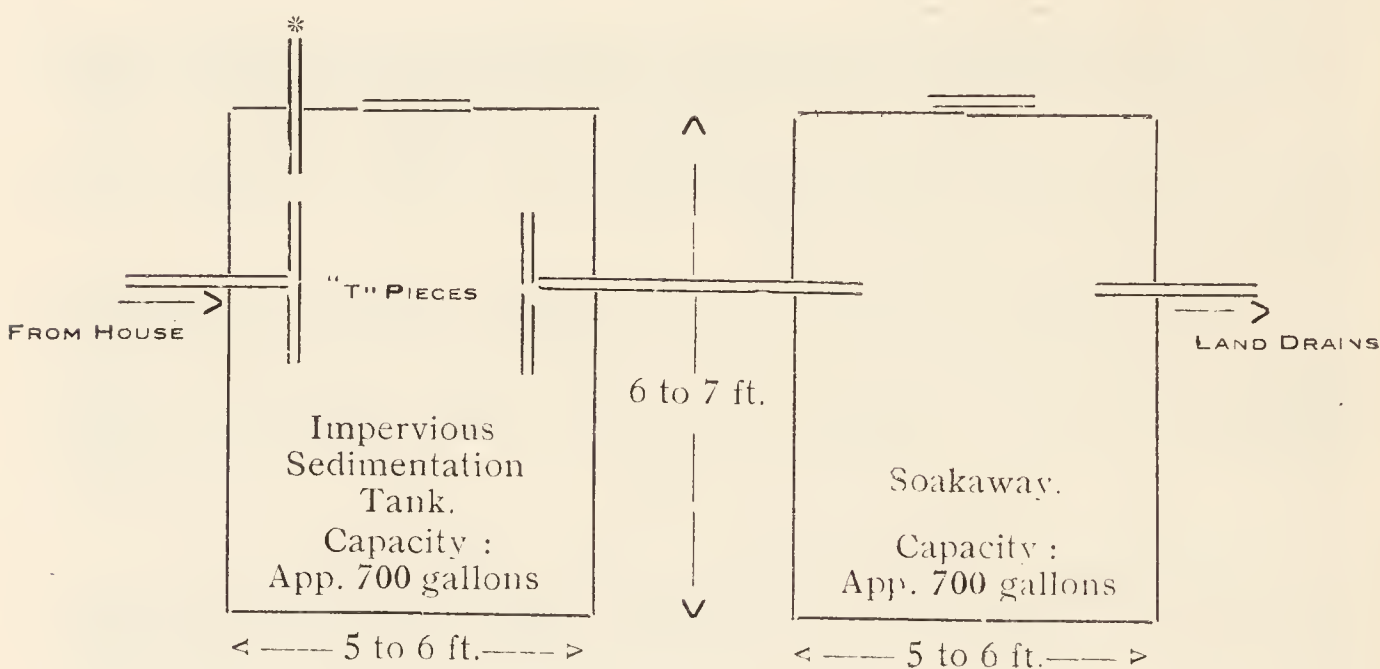
It was estimated that the total costs of the works proposed for the three parishes amount to £75,000 or; allowing for reconnections of drains, say £85,000 (works and contingencies only) which undoubtedly appears to be high, but when it is realised that these works, without extension, will serve a population estimated at say 7,250 persons equivalent to a cost of roughly £11 14s. 0d. per head, the cost cannot be considered excessive bearing in mind the peculiar factors to be taken into account, almost all of which unfortunately having the effect of raising the cost.

Many of the drainage systems attached to houses have been found to be unsatisfactory. The usual method of disposal of waste water is by means of soakaways. Provided these are of an adequate size and are not overloaded, these often go for 5-6 years without attention but often, after this, they are constantly filling and require emptying at frequent intervals.

The reason for this is that the sides of the soakaway become coated with slime and greasy matter which eventually turns it into a practically impervious system. Of course, the construction of soakaways for the disposal of waste water is not in accordance with the Building Byelaws which require the construction of impervious cesspools. In this area, however, there is no real objection to the construction of pervious cesspools apart from the fact that after a number of years' service they tend to become impervious and so require frequent emptying.

After a lengthy correspondence and a number of interviews, the Ministry of Health gave permission for the Medical Officer of Health to approve any system of disposal that he considered safe and satisfactory.

The arrangement which is now generally approved consists of a large impervious sedimentation tank up to 7 feet in depth together with a soakaway of an approved size and type. So that only "clean" water shall pass into the soakaway, a "T"-piece is required on the



pipe leading from the sedimentation tank to the soakaway. Thus grease and solids are retained in the sedimentation tank which can be emptied from time to time, while the soakaway should function without any attention for many years.

A number of houses in the area have this type of arrangement installed, and so far they are functioning quite satisfactorily.

Plans for several new Council Estates have been prepared during the year and it was felt desirable for the water carriage method of disposal for waste matters to be adopted. Information was obtained regarding the costs of small disposal plants for sewage disposal and it appeared that small type plants could be installed at quite a small capital cost. Tenders were therefore invited for the construction of small disposal plants at Holbeach St. Marks and Toll's Lane, Holbeach. However, the prices were much higher than was anticipated.

A Public Enquiry was held by the Ministry of Health to consider these schemes. In view of the high costs, it was decided to abandon the idea of small disposal plants.

In view of the desirability of fitting the water carriage system to Council houses, after consultation with the Ministry of Health,

this system was adopted and the houses were equipped with sedimentation tanks and soakaways. In making these arrangements, the homogenic and permeable nature of the soil was taken into account as it forms an efficient filtration medium. Also in view of the fact that the majority of houses have now got a mains supply, there is no danger of pollution of well-water.

Rivers and Streams.

No special measures were taken by the Local Authority to prevent pollution. The Catchment Boards of the Rivers Nene and Welland, in conjunction with the Fishery Board, take action where necessary.

Trouble is occasionally experienced in connection with the discharge of waste water into dykes and the deposit of rubbish in them. The latter nuisance is mainly occasioned by the absence of any form of scavenging service in the rural area. Such nuisances are normally abated by informal action.

Closet Accommodation.

In most cases, closet accommodation is of the pail or vault type. There are also a few chemical closets in use. There is a steady increase in the number of water closets ; some conversions have taken place and practically all new buildings have the water carriage system for the disposal of waste matters.

At Holbeach the pail type closet is usual, at Long Sutton the vault type is more common, and at Sutton Bridge the numbers of vault and pail type closets are approximately the same.

There are public conveniences for men and women at Holbeach and Long Sutton. At Sutton Bridge there is a men's convenience but this is in a very unsatisfactory condition and needs reconstruction. There is urgent need also for a convenience for women at Sutton Bridge.

Public Cleansing.

There has been no material change during the year with regard to the system of refuse collection and disposal.

A full scheme has, however, been prepared for the urban parts of Holbeach, Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge and certain parts of the Parishes of Lutton and Gedney adjacent to the main road.

The Scheme commences at Sutton Bridge, Long Sutton, Lutton and Gedney on the 1st January, 1940, and in Holbeach on 1st April, 1940.

An S. & D. 10 cubic yard freighter is to be used for the collection of domestic refuse. This vehicle is to be fitted with water-tight rear doors so that it can be used for the collection of night-

soil. Cesspools and vaults are to be emptied by means of an S. & D. Cesspool Emptier. Pipes can be laid up to 200 feet from the machine and the emptying of the average cesspool should be carried out in 6-7 minutes.

Refuse disposal is to be by controlled tipping at tips at Sutton Bridge and Holbeach.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

Summary of the Visits made by the Sanitary Inspector.

Water Supply	...	...	...	...	77
Drainage	...	...	...	...	171
Dykes, ditches, etc.	...	...	...	...	33
Refuse Disposal	...	...	...	...	82
Piggeries, etc.	...	...	...	...	10
Milk & Dairies	...	...	...	...	25
Slaughter-houses, etc.	...	...	...	...	31
Common Lodging Houses	...	...	...	...	5
Factories	...	...	...	...	8
Public Conveniences	...	...	...	...	57
Verminous Premises	...	...	...	...	7
Infectious Disease	...	...	...	...	65
Fumigations after Infectious Disease	...	...	...	...	16
Smoke Observations	...	...	...	...	3
Miscellaneous Nuisances, etc.	...	...	...	...	57
Shops	...	...	...	...	15
Housing (Slum Clearance)	...	...	...	...	248
Housing	...	...	...	...	130
Vans and Camping Sites, etc.	...	...	...	...	31
Fruit Pickers' Huts	...	...	...	...	11
Overcrowding	...	...	...	...	14
Rats and Mice	...	...	...	...	4
Buildings in course of erection	...	...	...	...	205
Schools	...	...	...	...	23
					1328

Camping.

There were only four licenses issued for use of land as sites for moveable dwellings during the year. There is no camping in the usual sense but certain fields are used for the accommodation of fruit and vegetable pickers in caravans and tents. Numbers of huts and bunks are in use at various times of the year for this type of casual labour.

Regular inspections are made of bunks, huts, caravans and tents, but it is impossible with the present staff to ascertain, let alone visit, all such establishments.

It is not possible to estimate with any accuracy the maximum number of fruit- and vegetable-pickers resident in the district at any one time.

Two of the licensed camping sites have been acquired by the Long Sutton Parish Council during the year.

Smoke Abatement.

As a result of informal action, abatement of smoke nuisance has taken place at a factory in the area.

Swimming Baths and Pools.

There are no privately or publicly owned swimming pools in the district.

Shops and Offices.

Inspections were commenced during the year of shops in the area with respect to ventilation, temperature, and sanitary conveniences. It has not been possible with the staff available to carry out inspection of all shops in the district.

As a result of informal action, the following improvements have been effected :— additional sanitary conveniences, washing facilities and heating arrangements at a provision stores at Holbeach.

Washing facilities have been provided at a shop in Holbeach. In this case, owing to certain difficulties, a certificate of exemption with relation to sanitary accommodation was given.

Generally, the sanitary and washing facilities are not altogether satisfactory in a number of shops, but owing to restriction of space and lack of facilities for drainage disposal it has not been practicable to require improvements in certain cases. A satisfactory solution will only be obtained with a proper and complete sewerage scheme.

Eradication of Bed Bugs.

A house was found to be infested with bed bugs during the year and was treated successfully. The house was on a Council estate, and the work was carried out by the Local Authority. The material used was " Cimex," a proprietary compound of sulphur and other materials.

Towards the end of the year arrangements were made for the fumigation of the furniture and personal effects of tenants of slum clearance houses who were to be moved to new Council Estates.

It is to be emphasised that the cost of such work should amply repay the local authority in avoiding disinfection work after habitation.

Schools.

The sanitary condition of the schools in this area is generally extremely bad. Some progress is being made by the Education Authority in installing water lavatories. The value of a plentiful supply of wash basins, hot water and clean towels has not yet been appreciated as one of the major factors in preventing spread of infection.

Housing.

Many of the cottages in East Elloe are in a far from satisfactory condition. They suffer from all the usual troubles such as dampness, general disrepair, insufficient headroom, unsatisfactory water supplies, lack of drainage facilities, and structural defects.

Of these defects, dampness is the chief one, and it is in practically all cases due to the absence of any damp-proof course.

Numbers of cottages in all parts of the district have been inspected and many scheduled for inclusion in the Council's Slum Clearance Schemes.

At the end of the year, the following was the position as regards provision of new houses for slum clearance tenants :

At Holbeach	...	44 houses and bungalows at Toll's Lane (in course of erection)
At Whaplode	...	12 houses at Stockwell Gate (in course of erection)
		8 houses at Cranesgate (in course of erection)
At Tydd St. Mary		14 houses at Long Road, Tydd Gote (in course of erection)

Some difficulty was experienced in getting permission to carry on with the erection of the houses at Stockwell Gate and Cranesgate, and hence the work was held up for a few months.

Much had been hoped of the Rural Workers' Acts, but the number of applications for assistance was not large, although one of the objects of the Act is to assist property owners whose cottages are in need of extensive alterations or improvement. The Act in this area is administered by the Holland County Council. This gives rise to some difficulty in that your Authority is not able to indicate to owners the exact work which will be required by the County Council before aid is given.

Double plans have to be submitted and to the owner, often a smallholder, the whole matter appears so involved and complicated that he will not bother to proceed with the work. This administration of a Housing Act by the County Council, an authority who are not otherwise a Housing Authority, adds to the confusion as they have no experienced Housing Inspector to deal with the matters, and it tends to set up two housing standards.

Also the Meetings of the appropriate Committee of the County Council are only held at three monthly intervals and hence very considerable delay is often occasioned in the consideration of applications for assistance.

An application was made at one time for the authority under the Act to be delegated to the East Elloe Rural District Council, but the application was not granted.

In many ways this is a pity, in that it is only reasonable to assume that the East Elloe R.D.C. has a greater and more personal contact with the owners whose property could be improved by assistance under this Act.

The provisions of the Act were suspended immediately on the outbreak of war. This was a rather peculiar action in that at present permission to build new houses is only granted if there is an urgent need by the agricultural population, surely it would have been desirable to have continued the Act in a modified form so that improvements could have been carried out to workers' cottages, and the necessity for the construction of new houses would possibly be postponed.

I am indebted to the Clerk to the County Council for the following information :

During the year, grants were made in respect of the following properties in East Elloe. The grant in all cases was for £100 per cottage.

Conversion of old farmhouse at Lutton Bank into two cottages.

Conversion of farmhouse at Cranesgate Farm, Whaplode, into two cottages.

Conversion of old farmhouse at Lutton into two cottages.

Two cottages on Welland House Farm, Saracen's Head, Whaplode.

Two cottages on Tritton Manor Farm, Tydd St. Mary.

Cottage in Masterdyke, Sutton St. James.

Cottage in Woad Lane, Long Sutton.

Plans, New Buildings and Alterations to Buildings.

As a result of the Ministry of Health placing the onus on the Medical Officer of Health of satisfying himself that the drainage arrangements were adequate, it was decided that all plans for new buildings, alterations, etc., should come before him.

This work was commenced at the end of June and has involved a very large amount of time. Numbers of plans had to be returned to the persons submitting them for various reasons, *e.g.*, insufficiency of detail, non-compliance with Byelaws, etc., etc.

Plans inspected included those for sixteen houses, nine bungalows, two shops, thirteen in respect of alterations to premises, and fourteen others for miscellaneous erections. Most buildings were visited a number of times during course of erection, and drains were inspected and subjected to the water and ball tests.

A circular letter was sent to builders, architects, etc., pointing out the more important parts of the Byelaws and indicating the requirements of the Council in certain directions. A certain amount of improvement was found after this.

The inspection of buildings by the Council's officers does a great deal to protect owners of property from inferior workmanship and probably assists the bona fide builders in competition with the odd job, spare time type of builder who unfortunately is very active in rural districts, and who has no real training or experience in building work

Evacuation.

During the year the many problems that would come in the wake of war were constantly in view. Among these were those concerned with the possible evacuation of large numbers of the civilian population from centres like London.

It was fortunate that before the outbreak of war a procedure had already been formulated and a practice held for the rapid medical inspection of evacuee children on arrival at the railhead at Spalding.

Large scale evacuation to Spalding from London took place from the 1st to the 3rd September, 1939. Possibly the following notes on the procedure adopted will be of interest.

Evacuees detained at Spalding for the Spalding Urban District, and the Spalding and East Elloe Rural Districts, those for the latter two districts continuing to their destination by motor coaches. After arrival the evacuees formed a long "crocodile" and passed on to the Medical Inspection Room. A barrier was formed across the room by four Health Visitors. Any child found with a dirty head was marked on the forehead with a skin pencil and detained; particulars re name, school, and group leader were taken and recorded. These children were then taken to Institutions for cleansing and taken next day to the village where the rest of the party had gone the previous day. On the second day, arrangements were made for mild cases to be cleansed on the premises and taken in private cars to their destination only a few hours after the main party.

On the second day a train arrived with mothers and children and not children alone as was expected. This, of course, gave rise to temporary difficulties as the Medical Officer in charge was unaware that any but children were being evacuated to these areas and had not been consulted by the Reception Officers or Billetting Authorities on any matter concerning evacuation and billeting.

No record was kept of the first contingent as to the number of pregnant women but thereafter all women were asked whether pregnant or not. If so, they were given a postcard to post on reaching their destination. On the postcard was to be put their name, address and date of expected confinement and was addressed to the Medical Officer of Health. About 70% of the cards were returned, and the remainder were found from our register and the Billetting Officer's returns. One hundred and twenty pregnant women were found and their names and addresses notified to the respective local authorities in whose areas they had been billeted. A few days later all these cases were transferred to another area.

With the above arrangements, it was found easily possible to deal with some 500-700 persons per hour, continuously, at which rate on many occasions the medical inspection had to be halted for short periods as the issue of rations and the bus-loading was not accomplished at this rate.

During the three days the total number of evacuees received at Spalding was 5351, and altogether 931 unaccompanied children were received in East Elloe. A number of mothers, helpers and school teachers were also received.

The last train-load consisted of "refugees" proper, who came without leaders or parties, showing apparently a lack of organisation by the London authorities.

Altogether, 228 children were detained for Pediculosis cap. and 26 children and 15 mothers were detained for Impetigo and/or Ped. cap. in mother or child, or both. Two diphtheria contacts were swabbed but found negative. One scarlet fever contact was detained. One pregnant woman was found with heart disease and also two mothers with 6 day old babies.

The inspection for Pediculosis cap. and the delousing would appear to have been reasonably satisfactory. Very few new cases have been found so far and in these the infection has been slight.

Generally speaking, evacuation was not altogether satisfactory in that large numbers of children returned home. Most of those who returned after a few weeks were those who were accompanied by their mothers and were encouraged to do so by the quiet conditions then reigning in London, and also the difficulties always inherent in trying to combine the country with the town. The Londoners missed the bustle and activity of the streets, and amenities such as mains water, electric light, electric and gas cookers, and baths, facilities which are lacking in most of the rural areas. Another factor was the inactivity forced on them by the fact that no working-class home has a kitchen in which two women, differing in ideas and habits, can work amicably.

It is regrettable that large houses could not have been taken over so that each family could have been self-contained, even then many would have returned as the first evacuation was to an extent born of fear.

Many children also returned particularly at Christmas, but those that have remained seem to have settled down very well.

In view of the almost general absence of proper bathing facilities in the usual workers' homes, a system was devised whereby children could have the advantage of weekly shower baths. The Casual Wards at Holbeach are fitted up for the

decontamination of gas casualties and A.R.P. personnel. A number of shower baths are installed and as these were not being used, permission was obtained for the children to make use of them. In collaboration with the Head-teachers, arrangements were made for evacuee children to be taken to the Casual Wards in the A.R.P. Ambulances, which are actually converted buses. In this way, the difficulty of transport from schools 8 and 10 miles from Hol-beach was overcome, and the training the ambulance drivers received was of great value. All the drivers are women volunteers and they have co-operated most willingly in this work and are deserving of great credit.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

Milk Supply.

Milk production is not carried on to any large extent. The average farmer or small holder keeps cows primarily for his own domestic purposes. Over two-thirds of the producers in the district have less than four cows and there are only very few with ten cows or more, and the work of inspection and supervision cannot be carried out satisfactorily and fairly to all the cow-keepers until adequate staff is available.

Two years ago, the Council adopted a code setting out the sanitary requirements for cowsheds. The number of routine visits so far made of premises has been very small owing to the calls on the staff of other duties.

Accredited and other designated producers are licensed by the County Council,

Meat and other Foods.

Two part time meat inspectors are employed by the Council. The sanitary inspectors also visit shops, slaughter-houses and stalls where necessary.

Statistics.

Number of Slaughter-houses in the area	...	29
Number of Licensed Slaughtermen	... ..	48
Number of visits paid to premises :		
Slaughter-houses, Shops, Stalls, etc.	..	2587

The following are extracts from the reports of the meat inspectors :

Long Sutton & Sutton Bridge Slaughter-houses (*Mr. J. Beeken*)

During the year, a total of 827 visits were paid to slaughter-houses, shops, stalls, etc. He inspected 527 beast, 816 sheep, 3119 pigs, 13 calves, and 13 lambs. Meat seized was as below :

17 stones of pork	...	bruised and decomposed.
6 pig carcasses	...	affected with erysipelas.
16 stones of beef	...	bruised and decomposed.
2 beasts' livers	...	ulcerated.

Other Slaughter-houses in the Area (*Mr. G. Hall*).

During the year, a total of 1760 visits were paid to slaughter-houses, shops, stalls, etc. Meat seized was as below :

3 stones of pork	...	tainted.
13 stones of pork	...	purples.
21 stones of beef	...	tainted.
3 beasts' livers	...	ulcerated.

Both meat inspectors are part-time and do not hold any qualifications in meat inspection. A large amount of meat, particularly pork, is sent out of the district.

It seems obvious from the figures above that the majority of carcasses are not inspected. This is probably due to the large number (29) of slaughter-houses in the district and to the irregular times of slaughter.

The whole situation is far from satisfactory and can only be radically improved by the appointment of a qualified meat inspector and the reduction in number of slaughter-houses by using a small number of well equipped slaughter-houses where inspection can be complete on every carcase, and drainage, lairage, cooling rooms, etc., can be provided and maintained satisfactorily.

Apart from the real improvement from the public health point of view, considerable economy should be effected in running costs and more efficient use made of the by-products.

Adulteration, etc.

No action has been taken under the Food & Drugs (Adulteration) Act, 1928, the Artificial Cream Act, 1928, the Public Health (Condensed Milk) Regulations, 1923 and 1927, the Public Health (Dried Milk) Regulations 1923 and 1927, and the Public Health (Preservatives, etc., in Food) Regulations 1925 to 1927.

The work of taking samples under the Food and Drugs Acts was carried out by the Police until the end of September, 1939. On the 1st October, 1939, this duty was taken over by the Holland County Council and their authorised Inspector is Mr. R. Fidling.

For the following report I am indebted to the Superintendent of Police at Spalding.

Samples of the following were taken in East Elloe during 1939, up to 30th September :

New Milk	...	...	18
Jam	...	...	1
Preserved Peas	...	...	3
Egg Powder	...	...	1
Arrowroot	...	...	1
Tea	...	...	1
Vinegar	...	...	1
Bread	...	...	1
Condensed Miik	...	...	1
Yeast	...	...	1
Camphorated Oil	...	...	1
Gin	...	...	1
Plums	...	...	1
Flour	...	...	1
Rice	...	...	1
Coffee	...	...	1
Sausages	...	...	1
Preserved Cream	...	...	2
Margarine	...	...	1
Oatmeal	...	...	1

Shell Fish (Molluscan)

There are quite extensive mussel lays in the Wash, but very little comes directly into East Elloe. The majority enters Boston or King's Lynn. It is estimated that approximately 22,000 cwts. enter the Port of Boston and about 18,000 cwts. at Port of King's Lynn. A very small quantity, about 15 cwts. enters at Fosdyke and possibly about 5 cwts. at Sutton Bridge. This is the only Port within the Council's area and is under the Port of Wisbech Authority.

Certain difficulties have arisen in the past over the disposition of certain layings which apparently do not come within the jurisdiction of any particular authority, and steps are to be taken to clarify the position and to investigate the possibility of purification stations at Boston and King's Lynn. A small station already exists at King's Lynn.

Shell-fish taken from the Wash are sent to all the principal towns in the country.

Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious and other Diseases

Generally the numbers of cases of infectious disease have been small. A small outbreak of diphtheria occurred towards the end of the year at Gedney Dyke. A total of seven cases were notified.

In October the notification of whooping cough and measles was made compulsory. All medical practitioners in the area were notified regarding the provisions of the Order, and eight cases of whooping cough were notified by the end of the year.

Immunisation of children against diphtheria has proceeded apace at the schools. During the year, special sessions were held at certain schools.

School-children immunised during year 1939.

Children ordinarily resident in East Elloe ...	1679
Evacuees	392

Total ...	2071

Infants over one year of age can be treated free of charge at the Infant Welfare Clinics. During the year, the number of children whose parents availed themselves of this service was 26, and a further 27 were treated by their own doctors.

Altogether, during the year, 2141 persons were immunised in the area.

Immunisation of children of school age is normally carried out by the County School Medical Staff, and that of infants by the County Medical Staff at the Infant Welfare Centres. A small number of injections are carried out by private practitioners who make a charge of 2/6 per injection, the material being provided by the Local Authority.

The prophylactic used is T.A.F. and two injections are normally given, at a month's interval.

Number of cases of Infectious Disease.

Excluding tuberculosis, 51 cases of infectious disease were notified.

The incidence of the various infections is shown in the following table :—

Disease	Total Cases Notified	Cases admitted to Isolation Hospital	Total Deaths
Smallpox	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	11	4	—
Diphtheria	11	9	1
Enteric Fever (including paratyphoid)	1	1	—
Puerperal Causes	1	1	—
Pneumonia	13	2	8
Erysipelas	2	—	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1	—	—
Measles	None notified	—	—
Rubella (not notifiable)	3	—	—
Chicken Pox (not notifiable)	—	—	—
Whooping Cough	8 plus	—	3
Cases admitted to hospital in which diagnosis of infectious disease not confirmed subsequently	—	1	—
Totals ...	51	18	12

Civilian cases of Rubella are not notified and the above three cases refer to non-civilians.

Analysis of Notified Cases under the following Age Groups :

Age Groups (Years).

<i>Disease.</i>	-1	1-	2-	3-	4-	5-	10-	15-	20-	35-	45-	65-	Total
Scarlet Fever	—	—	—	—	1	8	—	—	2	—	—	—	11
Diphtheria	—	—	—	1	—	1	3	4	1	—	—	1	11
Enteric Fever	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
Puerperal Causes	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
Pneumonia	—	1	—	—	—	4	1	1	2	1	3	—	13
Erysipelas	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	2
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Totals ...	1	1	—	1	1	13	5	5	5	3	3	2	40

Tuberculosis.

No action was taken by the Council under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, relating to persons suffering from Pulmonary Tuberculosis employed in the milk trade, or under Section 62 of the Public Health Act, 1925, or Section 172 of the Public Health Act, 1936, relating to the compulsory removal to hospital of persons suffering from tuberculosis.

Particulars of new cases notified in the district during the year and of deaths from the disease are given in the accompanying table. The total number of new cases notified was 12, which compares with 25 for 1938.

There were 8 deaths compared with 10 for the previous year. The system of notification of tuberculosis and of other infectious diseases is carried out satisfactorily by all concerned.

Table of New Cases of Tuberculosis and of Deaths from the Disease.

Age periods in years	NEW CASES				DEATHS			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0-	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1-	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
5-	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—
15-	2	1	1	—	1	2	—	—
25-	1	1	—	—	1	1	—	—
35-	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
45-	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55-	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
65 and upwards	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	5	2	4	1	5	3	—	—

Prevention of Blindness.

No action was taken by the Council under Section 66 of the Public Health Act, 1925, or under Section 176 of the Public Health Act, 1936, for the prevention of blindness or for the treatment of persons suffering from any disease or injury to the eye.

